Application 10/501031
Response to Office Action dated 01/19/2007

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Fig. 3 and to Fig. 14. The first sheet, which includes Fig. 3, Fig. 5 and Fig. 8, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 3, Fig. 5 and Fig. 8. In Figure 3 the title has been changed from MULTISTAGE DEPRESSURIZATION MODULE to MULTISTAGE EMULSIFICATION/ DISPERSION MODULE. The second sheet, which includes Fig. 14, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 14. In Figure 14, reference numeral 480 has been changed to 400.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet 3
Annotated Sheet showing changes to Sheet 3
Replacement Sheet 11
Annotated Sheet showing changes to Sheet 11

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. The specification has been amended to address formal issues. Proposed amendments to the drawings are submitted herewith to correct formal issues. Claims 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10 and 13 have been amended editorially. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-13 are pending.

Drawings

Applicants hereby present proposed amended drawings to revise the title and reference number labeling. Particularly, Figures 3 and 14 have been amended. With the proposed amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that the drawings are in proper form.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

The specification has been objected to under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to provide an adequate written description of the invention. The specification has been amended editorially, taking the issues in the rejection into account. Particularly, the relation "$D_2 > D_3 > D_1$" has been amended to "$D_2 > D_1 > D_3$" at line 17, page 4. The phrase "of each of the three absorption cells 21-1, 21-2 and 21-3" has been added at line 3, page 15 and "(D_2, $D_0 > D_1 > D_3$)" has been amended to "($D_2 > D_1 > D_3$ and $D_0 > D_1 > D_3$)" at line 7, page 15 in order to clarify the relation between D_2 and D_0, D_1 and D_3 (the comma after D_2 in the original denotes that both D_2 and D_0 have the same relative relationship to D_1 and D_3). Applicants respectfully submit that the specification as amended provides an adequate written description of the invention.

Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-3 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to claim the subject matter of the present invention. Claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 have been amended editorially, taking the issues in the rejection into account. Claims 2 and 7 are directed to a multistage depressurization module, whereas claim 8 is directed to a multistage emulsification/dispersion module. In this regard, claim 8 has been amended to recite "absorption cells of said multistage emulsification/dispersion module". Furthermore, in order to distinguish the diameters of the two modules, the first, second and third inner diameters D_0, D_1, D_2 and D_3 of claims 2 and 7 have been amended

to d_0, d_1, d_2 and d_3, respectively. d_0 of claims 2 and 7 corresponds to Dc at line 8, page 25 and further corresponds to the diameter of the outlet passage 37 in Fig. 8. d_1 of claims 2 and 7 corresponds to D_S at line 8, page 25, and further corresponds to the diameter of each of the depressurization cells 33-1, 33-1 and 33-3 in Fig. 8. d_2 of claims 2 and 7 corresponds to D_B at line 8, page 25 and further corresponds to the diameter of the depressurization cell 33-4 in Fig. 8. d_3 of claims 2 and 7 corresponds to D_M at line 8, page 25 and further corresponds to the diameter of each of the depressurization cells 33-5 and 33-6 in Fig. 8. The relation "D_0, $D_2 > D_1 > D_3$" has been amended to "$d_0>d_3>d_1$ and $d_2>d_3>d_1$" in order to clarify the relationship between d_0, d_1, d_2 and d_3. Claim 9 depends from claim 7.

D_1 of claim 8 corresponds to the diameter of each of the absorption cells 21-1, 21-2 and 21-3 in Fig. 3. D_2 of claim 8 corresponds to the diameter of the absorption cell 21-4 in Fig. 3. D_3 corresponds to the diameter of each of the absorption cells 21-5 and 21-6 in Fig. 3.

In view of the above amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-3 and 7-9 are definite. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 8 and 13 are objected to for informalities. Claims 7, 8 and 13 have been amended editorially, taking the issues in the objection into account. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are proper.

Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Application 10/501031
Response to Office Action dated 01/19/2007

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions or concerns regarding this communication can be directed to the attorney-of-record, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612) 455.3804.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER & LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
(612) 455-3800

Dated: April 19, 2007

By: _____
Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300
DPM/ym/ls

Inventor: NAKANO
Docket No.: 8279.758USWO
Title: EMULSIFICATION/DISPERSION SYSTEM USING MULTISTAGE DEPRESSURIZATION MODULE AND METHOD FOR PRODUCING EMULSIFIED/DISPERSED LIQUID
Attorney Name: Curtis B. Hamre
Phone No 612-455-3802
Sheet 3 of 13 ANNOTATED SHEET

3/13

Fig.3

MULTISTAGE EMULSIFICATION/DISPERSION MODULE
~~MULTISTAGE DEPRESSURIZATION MODULE~~

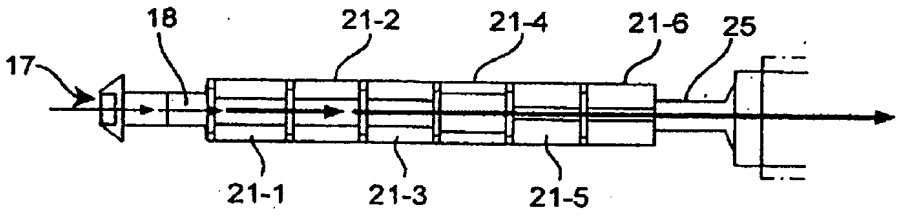


Fig.5

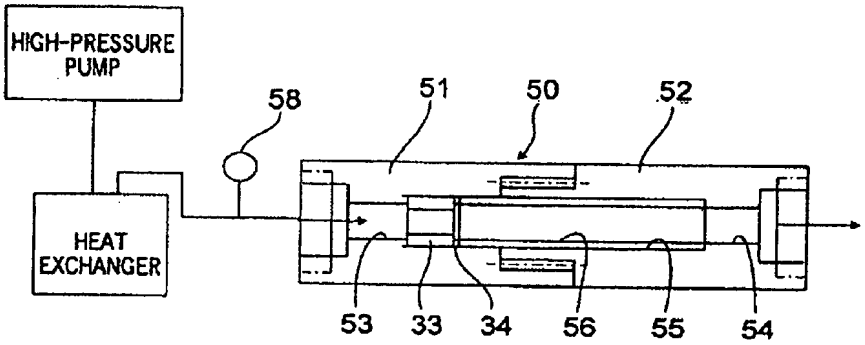
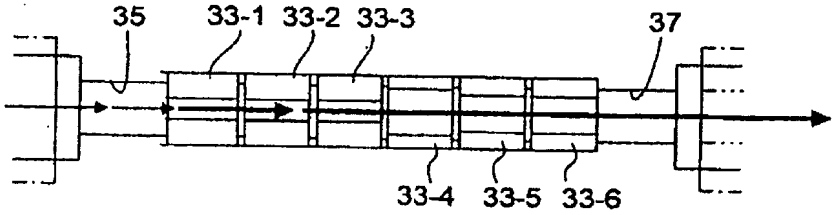


Fig.8



Inventor: NAKANO
Docket No.: 8279.758USWO
Title: EMULSIFICATION/DISPERSION SYSTEM USING MULTISTAGE DEPRESSURIZATION MODULE AND METHOD FOR PRODUCING EMULSIFIED/DISPERSED LIQUID
Attorney Name: Curtis B. Hamre
Phone No 612-455-3802
Sheet 11 of 13 ANNOTATED SHEET

11 / 13

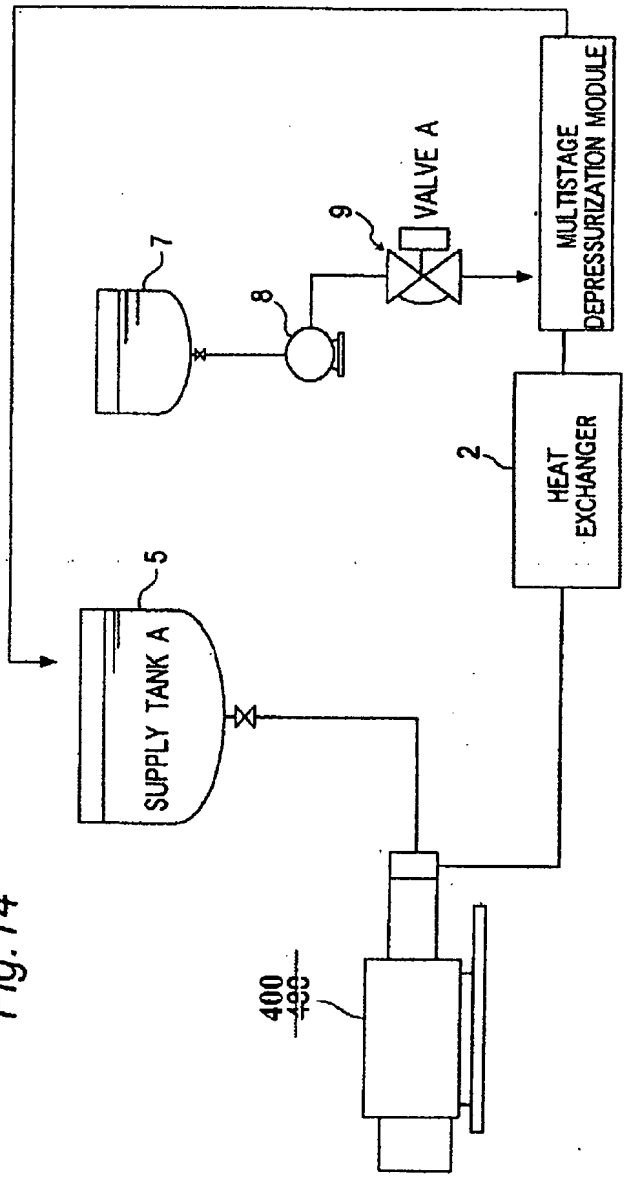


Fig. 14